

In the Specification:

Kindly amend page 10, line 11 to page 11, line 30, as follows:

--Polished rice is prepared (step S1). The polished rice may be supplied ~~directory~~ directly from an ordinary rice polishing machine equipped with the apparatus by the present invention or may be supplied from other polishing machines. Rice polishing bran (parched bran: registered as Japanese patent No.3453127 by the present inventor) used for as an abrasive is prepared (step S2). The polished rice and the abrasive in a desired ratio, for example 1:1 in volume, are stirred by stirring blades 3a (see FIG.2) so as to mix them (step S3). In this step the polished rice and the abrasive are mutually rubbed in order to strip bran including superficial bran and foreign debris sticking to the surfaces of rice grains from the rice grains. While a mixture of the polished rice and the abrasive is stirred, the level of the mixture is measured by a level sensor 8 (see FIG.2) in order to determine whether the mixture exceeds a predetermined level (or depth) or not (step S4). If the mixture exceeds the predetermined level, the mixture is transported to a tilted rotary drum sift 6 (FIG.2) for sifting (step S5) via a transporting means 5 such as a bucket conveyer, a screw conveyer, a pneumatic conveyer or the like. A cylindrical body 6a formed by a meshed net (see FIG.4(a)) is wound around the outer surface of the rotary drum sifting machine 6 in which the transported mixture is sifted. The sifted rice is extracted from the rotary drum sifting machine (step S6) and sent to the separating means constituted by a plurality of units (U1, U2....Un) each comprising a supply guide means 9a, a cylindrical rotary brushing means 9b, a regulating means 9c for smoothing a layer of rice grains and for regulating rice holdup and a combing wedge 9d, d'. Residual bran and foreign debris are separated from the sifted rice in the separating means (step S7). Separated rice is extracted as finished wash-free rice (step S11). Foreign debris such as fine powders and the like are discharged by a suction discharging means having a gas-solid

separating means 13 (see FIG.2) such as a cyclone, a bag-filter or the like (step S12), and at the same time air is exhausted via a suction fan 13b.

Whole bran sifted at the sifting step (step S5) and separated from the rice (step S8) is collected by a separated bran recovering and recycling means. Then the bran is returned to an abrasive supply tank 1 (see FIG.2) and used as the abrasive again (step S9). When the recycled bran is deteriorated it is replaced with a new abrasive (parched bran for rice polishing). Deteriorated bran is discharged and dumped (step S10). Some of the deteriorating bran may be recycled and used with newly added fresh bran.

When the level of the mixture measured at step S4 is lower than the predetermined level, a revolving rate of the stirring blades is raised such that the pressure of the mixture is raised to a pressure of the predetermined level at a regular revolving rate (step S13). In raising the revolving rate of the stirring blades, enough friction between the rice and the abrasive is obtained and almost homogeneous treatment can be attained even when a continuous wash-free rice producing procedure is finished or amount of the mixture is less than the predetermined level.

The rice polishing bran is parched at a high temperature (in the present embodiment ca. ~~120~~ 120°C), so that the parched bran contains virtually no water, forms dried hard granules and has no smell of raw bran. Therefore the parched bran is an optimistic abrasive for polishing rice, which shows excellent abrasive effects. Due to the properties mentioned above, the parched bran can be easily passed through meshes of the net without clogging the meshes. --